

AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-7 and add new claims 12 and 13 as follows. Claims 8-11 are withdrawn. A detailed listing of all present claims, withdrawn claims, and new claims, is provided below in compliance with revised 37 CFR 1.121.

1. (Amended) A humidifier for a fuel cell, comprising:

a hollow fiber membrane module having a hollow fiber membrane bundle, comprising a plurality of hollow fiber membranes bundles together, and a housing which accommodates the hollow fiber membrane bundle, the hollow fiber membrane module feeding a reactive gas, which is to be supplied to a fuel cell, inside the housing and outside the hollow fiber membranes, and a feeding off-gas, exhausted from the fuel cell, into the hollow fiber membranes, thereby transferring water in the off-gas via the hollow fiber membranes to the reactive gas and humidifying the reactive gas;

an off-gas flow entrance which the off-gas flows through into the hollow fiber membrane, the off-gas flow entrance being provided in one end of the hollow fiber membrane module; and

a liquid exhaust mechanism which exhausts liquid, which has been generated from the off-gas flowing through the off-gas flow entrance.

2. (Amended) A humidifier for a fuel cell according to [C]claim 1, further comprising a water blockage detecting unit which detects water blockage of the hollow fiber membrane in the off-gas flow entrance, the liquid exhaust mechanism being controlled in accordance with a detection result of the water blockage detecting unit.

3. (Amended) A humidifier for a fuel cell according to [C]claim 1, further comprising a storing unit which stores the exhausted liquid, and a supplementary humidification unit which performs supplemental humidification of the reactive gas by using the liquid stored in the storing unit.

4. (Amended) A humidifier for a fuel cell according to [C]claim 1, further comprising an output power detecting unit, which detects an output power of the fuel cell, and a controller, which uses the liquid exhaust mechanism to exhaust the liquid when the output power detected by the output power detecting unit is below a predetermined value.

5. (Amended) A humidifier for a fuel cell, comprising:

a hollow fiber membrane module having a hollow fiber membrane bundle, comprising a plurality of hollow fiber membranes bundled together, and a housing which accommodates the hollow fiber membrane bundle, the hollow fiber membrane module feeding off-gas, exhausted from a fuel cell, inside the housing and outside the hollow fiber membranes, and feeding a reactive gas to be supplied to the fuel cell into the hollow fiber membranes, thereby transferring water in the off-gas via the hollow fiber membranes to the reactive gas and humidifying the reactive gas;

a supply gas flow exit through which the reactive gas is exhausted from inside the hollow fiber membranes, the supply gas flow exit being provided in one end of the hollow fiber membrane module; and

a liquid exhaust mechanism which exhausts liquid, which has been generated from the reactive gas fed through the supply gas flow exit.

6. (Amended) A humidifier for a fuel cell according to [C]claim 5, further comprising a water level sensor, which detects accumulation of water in the supply gas feed exit, and a controller, which uses the liquid exhaust mechanism to exhaust the water when the water level sensor has detected that water is accumulating.

7. (Amended) A humidifier for a fuel cell according to [C]claim 5, further comprising an output power detecting unit, which detects an output power of the fuel cell, and a controller, which uses the liquid exhaust mechanism to exhaust the liquid when the output power detected by the output power detecting unit is below a predetermined value.

8. (Withdrawn)

9. (Withdrawn)

10. (Withdrawn)

11. (Withdrawn)

12. (New) A humidifier for a fuel cell according to claim 1, further comprising a controller for controlling the liquid exhaust mechanism in accordance with a humidification status of the fuel cell.

13. (New) A humidifier for a fuel cell according to claim 5, further comprising a controller for controlling the liquid exhaust mechanism in accordance with a humidification status of the fuel cell.